AFRICA RECOVERY

United Nations Vol. 8 No. 3 December 1994

SOUTHERN AFRICA AT PEACE FOR FIRST TIME IN 30 YEARS

UN brokers peaceful transitions in Angola, Mozambique

By Karen Gellen

Within one dramatic month late last year, the United Nations helped Mozambique successfully conduct its first multiparty elections and oversaw the signing of an Angolan peace pact after a year of negotiations in Lusaka. These two events, preceded by South Africa's remarkable transition to majority rule in April, brought the entire Southern African region to the verge of a stability it had not known since apartheid intensified in the late 1950s. Both events were the culmination of persistent diplomatic and humanitarian efforts led by the United Nations. African leaders, particularly from Southern Africa, also played a decisive role in an outcome that raised hopes for stability in a subregion largely devastated by war.

To consolidate the transition process, the Security Council on 8 February unanimously approved a third phase of the UN Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM III) with an initial mandate to 8 August. Conditions for gradually deploying 7,000 UN troops include the effectiveness of the cease-fire and agreed areas for quartering UNITA forces. Angola is to pay a portion of the mission's first-year $383 mn costs.

AP / John Parkin

Angolan President Eduardo dos Santos (centre) embraces UNITA representative General Eugenio Manuvakola (left) who had just signed a peace accord with Angolan foreign minister Venancio de Moura (right) in Lusaka.

In Mozambique, massive challenges confront one of the world's poorest countries after long years of deadly and ruinous war. When the UN Operation in Mozambique (ONUMOZ) began in December 1992, some 80 per cent of primary schools were closed or destroyed, social services were minimal and Mozambicans suffered a widespread destitution that was aggravated by recurrent drought.

Despite the devastation, ONUMOZ helped bring about the peaceful 27-29 October elections, the inauguration of a new National Assembly on 8 December and the swearing-in the next day of President Joaquim Chissano, whose Frelimo party won the legislative elections. The formal end of the mandate for ONUMOZ came on 16 December when Mr. Chissano appointed a new government.

In Angola, the signing on 20 November of the Lusaka Protocol peace pact had brought the country only to the "threshold of peace," said Mr. Boutros-Ghali reporting to the UN Security Council on 4 December. Noting that tensions

turn to page 14

Modest economic upturn for Africa

But more genuine support needed from donors, says ECA head

By Nii K. Bentsi-Enchill

Africa's 2.8 per cent growth rate in 1994, the highest in five years, permits "modest optimism" for 1995. But with its population growing even faster, at 3 per cent a year, per capita incomes continue to fall and enormous challenges remain, warned UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) Executive Secretary Layashi Yaker in an end-of-year review of Africa's economic prospects. Mr. Yaker said in Addis Ababa on 15 December that assuming "normal conditions", economic output could rise by 3 per cent in 1995, continuing the steady climb from negative growth in 1992.

He stressed that promising results from African initiatives could founder without donor support: just when aid is most needed to buttress Africa's drive for economic reform, democratization, capacity-building and regional integration, current trends in aid budgets "point towards contraction."

With per capita output falling by nearly 1.5 per cent a year since 1990 and poverty spreading rapidly, Africa is losing ground "both in absolute and relative terms," Mr. Yaker said. Faced with potential annual losses of some $2.6 bn under the Uruguay Round's "sweeping liberalization" of global trade, he stressed that Africa had no choice but to proceed "without delay on an equally sweeping overhaul of its economic structure."

turn to page 13

Diversification debate
page 9

UN mobilizes Rwanda aid
page 4

AFRICA RECOVERY

United Nations Vol. 8 No. 3 December 1994

CONTENTS

3 **South Africa aid stand praised by donors**

4 **UN appeals for Rwanda aid**
Tanzania's untold story *4*

5 **Avoiding the abyss in Burundi**
Burundi's key to peace *5*

6 **Staking common ground on population**

7 **UN Panel charts the way forward for Africa**

8 **African concerns grow over GATT deal**

9 **Diversification gets faint donor support**
Steps towards diversification *9*

10 **Accelerate reforms, donors tell Africans**

11 **Africa's agenda fading in Bretton Woods**

12 **African development aid faces downturn**

13 **Modest economic upturn for Africa**

14 **UN brokers peace in Angola, elections in Mozambique**
The transition in Mozambique *14*

High-Level Panel urges priority status for education of women and girls. Page 7

Woman voting in Mozambique elections held in October 1994. Page 14

Nelson Mandela was presented with an advance copy of The United Nations and Apartheid. *Page 20*

DEPARTMENTS

Baobab *16*
Agenda *17*
Books *17*
Briefs *18*
Watch *20*

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South African aid stand praised by donors

By Ann Shepherd in Johannesburg

South Africa has won praise from donor countries for its cautious and methodical approach to foreign aid as well as support for the mechanism it has set up to process aid offers. In securing aid pledges of R10 bn (roughly $3 bn) at its first international donor conference, held on 26-28 October, the government persuaded donors to direct their funding for this financial year to the 22 priority projects in its Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP).

The RDP is the "biggest challenge" facing South Africa, declared Mr. Jay Naidoo, Minister in charge of the RDP, as he welcomed donor endorsement of the Interdepartmental Committee on Development Cooperation (IDIC), the channel for all aid inflows.

Lending political weight to South Africa's determination to decide how aid will be spent over the next five years, Commonwealth Secretary-General Chief Emeka Anyaoku told reporters that "only the wearer of the shoe knows where it pinches." The International Donor Conference on Human Resource Development in the RDP, which was sponsored by the Commonwealth Secretariat and the UN Development Programme (UNDP), also marked "the first time that a recipient country has come up with such a clearly defined programme for receiving international assistance," Mr. Anyaoku said.

Prior to the conference, several donors (notably Japan and the European Union) had expressed frustration at the slow response to their aid offers since the May inauguration of a democratic government, with no official or body designated to deal with them. But in fact, the RDP office had sent a questionnaire to potential donor embassies asking them to detail their aid offers, or as Mr. Naidoo put it, "to unpack their aid packages." The information was gathered by a committee subsequently named the IDIC with a finance ministry representative as chair and other members from the RDP office (which is under the Office of the President), the Departments of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Industry, State Expenditure and the Centre for Economic Advisory Services.

A preliminary breakdown of the R10 bn in aid (which has been sent back to the donors for confirmation) shows R4 bn in grants, R4 bn in trade credit guarantees, export credits and preferential trade agreements and R2 bn in soft loans. Individual aid offers vary greatly in size, time frame and conditionality. For example, of the $1.3 bn offered by Japan over two years, only $50 mn is in grants and is tied to contracts with Japanese companies. They can, however, sub-contract to South African firms. Sweden's R110 mn a year is all in grants, with tenders open to international bidding. Funds unused in one financial year may be carried over, although officials warn this is likely to adversely affect future allocations.

The government has reallocated R2.5 bn from its departments to the RDP Fund for such priority projects as rehabilitation of municipal services, urban renewal in violence-hit areas, nutrition and health programmes, and a pilot land reform project. To access these funds, ministries must have a business plan for each project and must also show their efforts within their existing budget to address RDP priorities.

Donors have agreed in principle to channel grant money through the RDP Fund to priority projects, but most say they will insist on monitoring each project they finance.

The government remains circumspect about borrowing, even on concessional terms, although its debt ratio is low by African standards. The government is yet to conclude any deal with the World Bank, which says it could lend up to $1 bn a year. Deputy Finance Minister Alec Erwin justifies the caution, pointing out that the government is undertaking three simultaneous processes: identifying all aid offers; beginning to match these offers with its 1995/96 programmes; and integrating aid into long-term investment plans.

Rural development comes next

Already, this exercise has shown donors leaning towards funding for human resource development, says an official in the RDP office who has been analyzing aid pledges. This is a natural sequel to the scholarship and training programmes for black South Africans that many donors provided before the end of apartheid. However, rural development warrants more attention from donors, government officials say, adding that they intend to put more emphasis on this area. A more technical, follow-up donor conference is scheduled for next February, just before the March presentation of the 1995/96 budget, by which time the IDIC's study of foreign aid should be finished.

Publicly, donors have praised this rigorous examination of their aid offers. South Africa's method is "the only sustainable approach... What South Africa is striving for by way of transparency, integrating aid into the budget, and avoiding white elephants is what (donors have) been advocating for years," said Mr. Johan Brisman, Minister in charge of Development at Sweden's Pretoria embassy.

But in private, donors fear that the IDIC will be unable to cope with the volume of aid business. The conference communique obliquely addressed this concern, stating that the IDIC had to approve projects in broad terms, implementation could be worked out with the relevant ministries. Another unresolved question is the proportion of grants which will now reach non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Asked what would happen to the Kagiso Trust, South Africa's largest NGO up to now largely funded by the European Union, a senior EU official said: "That is up to the government." But all parties stress that NGOs will not be victimized in this new era of open bilateral relations. ■

The United Nations and

Apartheid

1948-1994

Introduction by Boutros Boutros-Ghali, Secretary-General of the United Nations

This landmark publication chronicles the central role played by the United Nations in supporting the struggle against apartheid in South Africa. For the first time, the texts of more than 200 key documents and historic texts have been gathered in a single volume.

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UN appeals for urgent aid to Rwanda

The UN has asked donors for $1.5 bn in 1995 to hasten reconstruction in Rwanda and enable some 2 million refugees to return. Stressing the urgency of moving smoothly from relief to recovery and rehabilitation, an 18-19 January round-table meeting in Geneva organized by the UN Development Programme asked for $764 mn while a 20 January inter-agency appeal called for $710 mn. The latter included $502 mn for Rwandese and Burundese refugees, and $208 mn for programmes inside Rwanda.

However, with 59 out of 60 countries showing reluctance to provide funds or troops, the UN has dropped its plan to deploy 5,000 peace-keepers in refugee camps in Zaire. A proposal to provide support for Zairean policing of the camps also met with scepticism. In November, the Council had condemned exiled Rwandese leaders, armed forces and militia for preventing the return of refugees and interfering in relief distribution. It backed Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali's call for "immediate and major" aid to help the Rwandese government create the conditions for refugees to return. But it balked at his proposal of immediate, UN-led military action to protect the refugees.

In two November reports to the Security Council, Mr. Boutros-Ghali argued that because of their "proven propensity for violence," Hutu political leaders and their forces must be relocated away from refugees. Their militia were controlling refugee camps in eastern Zaire, brutalizing refugees and aid workers, stockpiling food aid, "actively recruiting and training new troops" from refugee camps in Zaire and Tanzania, and "intensifying their propaganda campaign" against the government in Kigali. All this indicated preparations for "an armed invasion," and there had already been "some cross-border incursions" from the camps, the Secretary-General reported.

Meeting in Nairobi on 7 January, the presidents of Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda and the Zairean prime minister called for safe corridors to enable Rwandese refugees to return home from camps in Tanzania, Burundi and Zaire. On 19 December, the UN High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) said it would resume aiding voluntary repatriation, most urgently from Burundi due to ethnic violence there. Conditions in Rwanda were "not completely safe, but they are safer and better than in the camps," UNHCR said.

The "reign of terror" in the camps had made many non-governmental organizations (NGOs) threaten to withdraw and the World Food Programme (WFP) protested against "harassment and intimidation by Zairean paramilitary forces against UN agencies and NGOs." With severe malnutrition doubling since August among children in some camps, a UN official said the situation was "increasingly untenable from a political, humanitarian and ethical point of view." Two million internally displaced Rwandese also depend on relief aid, but suffer "violent harassment" in their camps, said Mr. Boutros-Ghali. Aided by UN Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR) troops, the government launched security sweeps in the camps, and postponed its deadline for closing the camps to end-February 1995.

UNAMIR also needs more funds, said Mr. Boutros-Ghali, as its 5,600, mainly African, troops face "escalating security incidents." The Security Council extended its mandate to 9 June 1995, ordering it to help set up a national police force and protect International Tribunal staff that is investigating the genocide and will prosecute the perpetrators. With only a third of the 147 human rights monitors deployed, Mr. Boutros-Ghali called for more funds to help them "create a more secure environment."

SOMALIA

In mid-January, the UN Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM II) moved its headquarters to Mogadishu airport as it prepared for total withdrawal by 31 March 1995. With insecurity widespread and repeated inter-clan clashes in Mogadishu, Kismayu and "Somaliland," UN Special Representative Victor Gbeho of Ghana urged UN and NGOs to pull out all international staff to avoid kidnappings and attacks. Mr. Boutros-Ghali had earlier secured US and Italian naval cover for the withdrawal in case of "hostile action by Somali factions." In late January, both General Farah Aidid and Mr. Ali Mahdi promised not to interfere with the UNOSOM withdrawal.

The "risk of a return to war is real," said a 26-27 October Security Council mission. Relief and rehabilitation work was impossible in most regions, UNOSOM was now a target for looting and dedicated to "little more than defending itself," it added. But famine would not recur for at least a year if insecurity did not escalate, said mission

Tanzania's untold story

I was dismayed to note that in your excellent Vol. 8 No. 1-2 edition there was not a single word about Tanzania in your article on Rwanda. I believe Tanzania's efforts over the last year represent one of the outstanding positive stories from Africa in recent times. While the Tanzanian government has repeatedly had to mediate political settlements for Burundi and Rwanda, it has at the same time been providing incredible humanitarian assistance to the peoples of these countries.

In October 1993, the bloody coup in Burundi pushed over 200,000 people across the border. Tanzanians did not hesitate to give them food, shelter and protection. Soon after, the UN High Commission for Refugees and international volunteer agencies helped the Tanzanians to create camps for the refugees and secure large supplies of essential relief materials. Many refugees returned home within a few months. Six months later, Rwanda exploded and hundreds of thousands of Rwandese fled to Tanzania. Once again, Tanzanians did not hesitate: borders were kept open and emergency supplies, mobilized earlier to cope with the influx from Burundi, were swiftly deployed to help over 400,000 Rwandese refugees who were put in secure camps. In Tanzania today, with the Burundese who stayed, the Rwandese, tens of thousands from Sudan, Somalia and other countries, there are far more than 600,000 refugees.

Tanzania's government and people have neither sought nor received international praise for their efforts. The international media has prominently covered the increasingly difficult situation of Rwandese refugees in Zaire, while ignoring the success story in Tanzania. Which developed country would take 600,000 refugees in a year? For more than three decades, Tanzania's government and people have been providing humanitarian aid to all Africans seeking refuge there, without controversy. It is time Tanzanians received some credit for their enormous effort.

Frank Vogl
Vogl International (Washington, DC, US)

chairman Colin Keating of New Zealand. Nearly 1 million Somalis are refugees or internally displaced. UN agencies and NGOs pledged to continue working "wherever possible" and asked the Security Council to authorize "protected humanitarian operational bases at essential ports and airports" as well as special funding for security in order to safeguard voluntary allocations for relief work. In late December, the UN launched a $70.3 mn appeal for more relief and rehabilitation work until June 1995.

SUDAN

On 30 January, the UN launched a $101 mn appeal for 1995 covering six priority areas of relief and rehabilitation work for 4.25 million Sudanese hit by war and drought, over three-quarters of them in the south.The UN projects will build on gradually improved access for relief workers and, after an excellent cereal harvest, the prospect of enhancing household food security and the overall health of vulnerable groups. Following an 86 per cent donor response to the $186 mn appeal in 1994, the UN urged donors to do even better in 1995.

LIBERIA

The UN Security Council extended the mandate of the UN Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL) to 13 April 1995, urging the proliferating factions to finalize the composition of a Council of State, implement the Accra Agreement they signed on 21 December and observe the 28 December cease-fire. The pact was brokered by Ghanaian President and current Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) chairman Jerry Rawlings at lengthy talks attended by the Secretary-General's new Special Representative Anthony Nyakyi of Tanzania. The factions had agreed to help set up safe havens and buffer zones throughout Liberia, to hold elections by 14 November 1995 and install a government by 1 January 1996, but by end-January, they had failed at the initial hurdle of setting up a Council of State.

UNOMIL's military observers are down to 90 from the mandated 368 and are deployed in under 15 per cent of Liberia. With two-thirds of Liberians needing relief aid, UN agencies launched a $64 mn appeal for January-June 1995. The factions have stolen nearly all relief supplies and equipment outside Monrovia, Mr. Boutros-Ghali said, stressing the gravity of rural conditions. He urged ECOWAS leaders to tighten the arms embargo. ■

Avoiding the abyss in Burundi

Tension in the capital, Bujumbura, was high at end-January as the minority Unity for National Progress party (UPRONA) told its leading member in government, Prime Minister Anatole Kanyenkiko, to resign and called for the overthrow of the government. The UN Security Council condemned this "intimidation" and urged all Burundese, "particularly the national security forces," to refrain from violence. In December 1994, UPRONA had threatened to quit the coalition government, in office since last October, in protest at the National Assembly speaker chosen by the majority FRODEBU party (Front for Democracy in Burundi). With Bujumbura under curfew since mid-December, urgent mediation efforts were led by UN Special Representative Ahmedou Ould Abdallah and the Parliamentarians for Global Action (PGA).

Peace has been precarious since the early October 1994 inauguration of President Sylvestre Ntibantunganya (FRODEBU) and Prime Minister Kanyenkiko. Many civilians have been killed in Bujumbura and in provincial areas, notably refugees near the border with Rwanda. Extremists are "still a real danger," said Mr Ould Abdallah, stressing that donors must provide immediate aid to help consolidate moderate forces. The PGA has praised Mr. Ould Abdallah's work in helping "avoid a fall into the abyss" although Burundi is still a "powder keg." Violence occurs "with impunity," said the Security Council last December, urging prompt restoration of the judicial system so that the perpetrators of the October 1993 coup attempt and subsequent massacres of 50,000 people may be prosecuted. The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights set up a Bujumbura office in June and the Organization of African Unity deployed 30 military observers. Mr Ould Abdallah said donors should help raise their number to 47.

Relief agencies are helping 1.3 million displaced Burundese and 300,000 Rwandese refugees. With the expected return of a third of the 700,000 Burundese who fled after October 1993, the World Food Programme says food needs may double and it is supplying seeds and tools to encourage the return of the displaced to self-sufficient agriculture. ■

UN

Ahmedou Ould Abdallah

Burundi's key to peace

Power-sharing is the key to peace, stresses Mr. Ahmedou Ould Abdallah who, as the Secretary-General's Special Representative to Burundi, has been credited with helping prevent a political explosion. Pointing to the region's volatility, he commends the "wisdom of Burundi's people" and political parties, all but one of which signed a vital "Convention of Government" last September. This gave FRODEBU 14 ministerial posts while 11 posts went to UPRONA, and enabled the National Assembly to amend the Constitution and elect a new President. A rough, three-month campaign had preceded the election of late President Cyprien Ntaryamira who was then in office only two months before the fateful 6 April plane crash. Amidst suddenly heightened tension, Mr. Ould Abdallah secured pledges of cooperation between military and political leaders and successful appeals for calm on radio and television. A 25 April coup attempt and sporadic, nation-wide violence helped persuade politicians that new elections would be very divisive.

With only a small and very cost-effective UN team (one adviser and one secretary), Mr. Ould Abdallah says he was easily able to mediate between the parties, "constantly meeting all sides and eating together," as a sort of "older brother." He used the Angolan case to argue that "winner-take-all politics" does not work in Africa. He also tried to show how the two sides needed each other, as UPRONA lacked the mandate to govern while FRODEBU lacked experience. Still, some power-sharing issues persist, progress is slow in disarming the militia and broadening the ethnic balance of the army, and there have been mutual accusations over arms supplies to Rwandese political forces. Mr. Ould Abdallah stresses that the root problem is "not ethnicity but poverty" which afflicts 84 per cent in one of Africa's most densely populated countries. He says UN, donor and NGO humanitarian and development efforts are now crucial to any long-term solutions.

By David Hecht

Staking common ground on population

By Ernest Harsch in Cairo

Despite sometimes acrimonious debate, the Programme of Action adopted by the 5-13 September International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) staked out much common ground. Taken together, its recommendations for reducing infant and maternal mortality, raising women's educational levels and making access to reproductive health care (including family planning) universal by 2015, reflect a new international consensus that population issues can only be effectively tackled in a development context. The Programme, says Ms. Nafis Sadik, UN Population Fund (UNFPA) Executive Director and conference secretary-general, recognizes that "poverty is the most formidable enemy of choice."

Not only are wide-ranging measures needed to spur development more generally, the Programme states, but greater resources must go to population and family planning efforts. The cost of the specifically population-related programmes agreed at the conference is estimated at $17 bn annually by the year 2000, or about three times current spending.

Our individual and collective task is to ensure that the optimism which emerged from the conference is turned into tangible benefits for people everywhere.

Nafis Sadik, UNFPA Executive Director

Integrated approach

For official delegations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) from Africa and other developing regions, the ICPD's broad conclusions were a big step in advancing their vision of human-centred development, with greater social investments essential. Population policies should be "not just about survival, but about development and the quality of life... There is no quality of life in situations of extreme poverty, hunger and starvation," said Dr. Florence Manguyu of Kenya, co-chair of the committee directing the ICPD's NGO Forum.

The Cairo consensus contrasts with the 1974 and 1984 population summits where Northern countries pressed a narrow agenda focused on population "control," provoking sharp reactions from developing countries. Now, many proponents of population and family planning admit the need to integrate their goals with broader development concerns.

Developing countries in turn are tackling the challenge of rapid population growth. Namibian Health and Social Services Minister Nickey Nyambo said in Cairo that without strong economic growth, his country's "high rate of population growth (3 per cent a year)" would eventually affect the government's ability to "meet the expectations of the people."

Several sub-Saharan countries (notably Botswana, Kenya and Zimbabwe) have invested heavily in health and family planning programmes. As a result, they have been able to cut their fertility and population growth rates. Keys to success were raising the level of local community involvement and improving the socio-economic status of women, two elements which featured heavily in the Programme of Action.

The emphasis of the ICPD Programme on improving the position of women "will bring women at last into the mainstream of development," said Ms. Sadik. "It will protect their health, promote their education, and encourage and reward their economic contribution." At the conference itself, women were highly visible and assertive in ensuring that their concerns were substantively addressed.

Northern and the Southern NGOs were very active in Cairo, with several thousand groups taking part in a forum that ran parallel to the ICPD; many government delegations also included NGO representatives. For example, Mr. Fred Sai, president of the International Planned Parenthood Federation, was in Ghana's official delegation and was also elected by the ICPD to chair the committee that drafted the Programme's final text.

Before the final consensus, many Africans felt the debates focused excessively on controversial issues like abortion. Development issues suffered "serious neglect," said women's coordinator Cece Modupe Fadope, from Nigeria. Others said there was still an over-emphasis on strictly population issues, with a focus "on the various symptoms rather than the fundamental malaise of underdevelopment," Semere Russom of Eritrea told a plenary session.

A memorandum issued by official African delegations said that certain crucial issues were not "addressed adequately," including "the impact of adjustment programmes, devaluation and external debt," the expansion of education and social services, and even hot issues such as migration and refugee movements.

Financing concerns

The memorandum also described the financing projections in the Programme as "far below" Africa's needs: out of the $17 bn annual total for population-related spending by 2000 (rising to $21.7 bn by 2015), Africa's needs were estimated at $2.2-3.0 bn (rising to $4.3-5.6 bn by 2015). Donor aid "must begin to be commensurate with the magnitude" of Africa's economic problems, Swaziland Prime Minister Prince Mbilini told the conference.

The Programme proposed that two-thirds of the required financing be borne by developing countries and one-third by donors. Currently, developing countries shoulder three-quarters of the costs. But even two-thirds is too much for Africa to meet through its own resources, the memorandum argued. It suggested 50 per cent by the year 2000, rising to 60 per cent by 2010 "as population activities gain momentum."

African countries supported the "20/20" proposal put forward principally by UNICEF and the UN Development Programme (UNDP). This urges donors to raise from 7 to 20 per cent their aid to basic health, primary education, and child nutrition, with developing countries also moving from 13 to 20 per cent of their public spending. However, many ICPD delegations wanted more time to consider the proposal and agreed to postpone further discussion to the UN's March 1995 World Social Summit in Copenhagen. ■

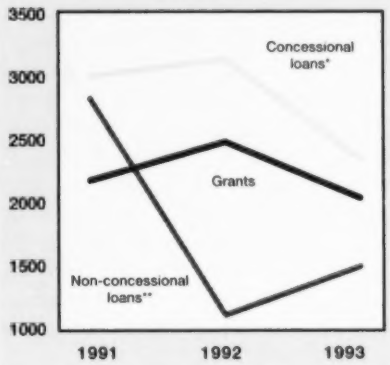
Panel charts the way forward for Africa

Africa urgently needs greater resource flows and faster human development, declared the UN Secretary-General's Panel of High-Level Personalities on African Development at its fourth meeting in September at UN headquarters in New York. While facing the immediate problems of its numerous humanitarian emergencies, Africa must still tackle the long-term objectives of its development agenda. The Panel therefore urged Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, along with African and donor governments, to make human resource development a top priority, with resource flows responding to locally-determined needs. Special emphasis should be on improving education for women in general and girls in particular, the Panel added.

Perhaps the "single most important factor to help build Africa right now" is to improve girls' education, said Ms. Catherine Bertini, Executive Director of the World Food Programme (WFP) who chaired the 19-20 September sessions on behalf of the Secretary-General. This would have positive "multiplier effects" on education and health and on slower population growth. The Panel listed three areas of concern: basic education for all; primary health care, AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases and the promotion of generic drugs; and population and development.

It said investments in human resource development would have to be effectively integrated with macro-economic policies, demographic factors, development infrastructure and policy on science and technology. This implied trade-offs between the competing demands of different sectors and various human resource development investments. There would also have to be clear definition of activities to be undertaken by the state and by the private sector.

UN resource flows to Africa
($ millions)



* From the International Development Association (IDA) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)
** From the World Bank and International Finance Corporation

Source: Africa Recovery based on UN data.

Better coordination within the UN

African countries would need help from organizations and agencies of the UN system to strengthen the relevant analytical, managerial and institutional capacities, Panel members said. After considering a discussion paper on human resource development in Africa prepared by the UN Development Programme (UNDP), they urged the Secretary-General not only to mobilize international resources to support Africa's human development efforts but also to enhance coordination within the UN system.

Better coordination was vital, the Panel said, noting that the "proliferation of UN bureaucracies" tends to lead to "less than effective management and utilization" of resources that are increasingly scarce. It recommended more support for building and strengthening the capacity in African countries to use development aid more effectively. Technical assistance from the UN system to promote capacity-building should therefore be demand-driven and responsive to local needs, the Panel argued. The UN should also take initiatives on harmonizing and simplifying the procedures and formalities of financing organizations in line with the needs of recipient countries.

The Panel endorsed the recommendations of a discussion paper on financial resource flows to Africa from the UN system prepared by the Office of the Special Coordinator for Africa and Least Developed Countries (OSCAL). It also decided to include at a future meeting discussion of financial flows from bilateral donors, the private sector and possibly non-governmental organizations, and asked its secretariat in OSCAL for a more comprehensive analysis.

The Panel of High-Level Personalities was appointed by Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali in December 1992 to provide him with practical suggestions on mobilizing more effective international responses to Africa's urgent needs. The Panel advises Mr. Boutros-Ghali on African development in general and in particular on the implementation of the UN New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UN-NADAF), adopted by the General Assembly in December 1991. The New Agenda sets out the mutually reinforcing responsibilities and commitments made by African governments and the international community to promote economic recovery and development in Africa.

Africa is the main recipient of grants from the UN system, but OSCAL points out that in 1993, 40 per cent of these grants came in emergency food aid from WFP. Although grants rose from 40 per cent in 1992 to 43 per cent of total UN disbursements to Africa in 1993, OSCAL expresses concern at the decline in the same period of both grant commitments (from $2.47 bn to $2.03 bn) and actual grant disbursements (from $2.45 bn to $2.32 bn). It calls for greater resource allocations to Africa (including concessional and non-concessional lending) and more support for improvements in the capacity of African countries to absorb external resources.

Capacity-building

In view of Africa's financial and administrative constraints, UNDP stresses the crucial importance of capacity-building. The UN system "should act as a catalyst" by strengthening Africa's capacity to design and implement its own programmes for human development, and to mobilize the required domestic and international resources to make rapid, substantial and durable progress.

In reviewing the gains and reverses in Africa's social sectors since the 1960s, the UNDP paper also discusses the "inappropriateness" of various African and donor country policies for human development. It urges African governments and the international community to give priority to promoting sustainable human development, and proposes a minimum programme of immediate action that includes adult literacy and health-care campaigns and steps to improve nutritional levels and food security. ■

African concerns grow over GATT deal

Faced with major losses from the Uruguay Round and the urgent need for financial and technical aid, Africans are challenging donor countries to make good on their promises of compensation. Speedy action on such measures for Africa and the least developed countries (LDCs) will be "an initial real test of the goodwill of the most important protagonists in international trade," declared Ambassador Ramtane Lamamra of Algeria at the UN in November, speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. Meeting late October in Tunis, African trade ministers also stressed the importance of "faithfully" implementing Uruguay Round commitments to provide food aid grants to LDCs and net food-importers along with financial and technical aid to improve agricultural productivity and infrastructure. Their "Framework for Action" noted that Africa's technical assistance needs "must be accompanied by international support measures" that include "effective debt relief" and funding to "strengthen and diversify production capacity."

UN

UN Economic Commission for Africa Executive Secretary Layashi Yaker (left), and Mr. Nitin Desai, head of the UN Department of Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development, briefing African delegations in New York last October.

But in a period of shrinking aid budgets and doubts about donor commitment, African parliamentarians have questioned why they should ratify the Uruguay Round agreement when it is against the continent's interests, said Mr. René Valéry Mongbe, Benin's permanent representative to the UN. He was speaking at a mid-October briefing on the Uruguay Round for African delegations to the UN chaired by Mr. Nitin Desai, Under-Secretary-General of the UN Department of Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development (DPCSD).

Both Mr. Mongbe and Organization of African Unity (OAU) Ambassador to the UN Ibrahima Sy noted the great reluctance of donor countries to support the African diversification fund proposed by the UN Secretary-General, although diversification is widely seen as crucial to economic recovery. After over two years of fruitless debate about diversification, Africans may need to pursue a different route, said Mr. Sy. He shared Mr. Mongbe's concern over the post-Uruguay erosion of Africa's trade preferences, the rise of "neo-protectionism" and other blockages to African exports. In such conditions, they questioned the likely adequacy of compensatory measures for Africa under the new General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) deal.

Vital need for diversification

Nevertheless, Mr. Desai argued, Africa must promote food security and agriculture because developed countries had already made commitments that leave the continent facing fewer trade preferences and higher global food prices. Diversification is the key to coping with the impact of the Uruguay Round, said Mr. Desai, adding that in his department, work continues in the Office of the Special Coordinator for Africa and the Least Developed Countries (OSCAL) on the diversification issue. Executive Secretary Layashi Yaker of the UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) in turn commended the efforts made by the Secretary-General and by General Assembly President Amara Essy of Côte d'Ivoire to place diversification squarely on the current Assembly's agenda.

Stressing the challenges ahead, Mr. Yaker said the ECA had so far helped 30 African countries to analyze the impact of the GATT deal and sectoral analyses would soon follow. Africa's weak production structures limited its ability to benefit from any future improvements in market access while lost trade preferences would lead to lower market share and lower export earnings. Given the links between international trade patterns and poverty in Africa, he said the World Trade Organization (WTO), which came into being on 1 January 1995, had a vital role to play in obtaining compensation for Africa's short-term losses. Such compensation could help sustain longer term gains by contributing to the export diversification which was so important for Africa.

Immediate repercussions of the GATT deal would include greater pressure on the balance of payments and on debt-servicing, reduced import capacity and lower food intake for the poorest Africans, said Mr. Rahman Khalil of the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). He said that trade preferences for African cocoa and coffee exports to Europe could totally disappear while tariff escalation would continue acting as a disincentive to greater local processing of Africa's commodities. African governments would have to significantly alter and continuously review their trade laws, and also notify the WTO of legislative changes made to meet the regulations of the GATT deal.

Confronted by these challenges, Africa must look beyond the short-term and transform its production and trade structures, Mr. Khalil argued. Competitive advantage cannot be shielded permanently by trade preferences, he added, stressing the need for domestic action to raise economic competitiveness. African countries had to improve their services infrastructure and the investment climate, and take advantage of technological developments. While UNCTAD was providing technical and advisory support in these areas, developed countries could also help ease Africa's transitional costs and strengthen the enabling environment through greater debt relief and increased financial flows. ■

Diversification gets faint donor support

By Nii K. Bentsi-Enchill

Africa's urgent need to reduce its dependence on a narrow range of export commodities is widely acknowledged. But the critical absence of practical and financial support for concrete steps towards diversification was evident in the General Assembly's latest resolution on the UN New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UN-NADAF). Adopted without a vote on 22 December, a consensus on the resolution had emerged only after long, arduous negotiations and the personal intervention of General Assembly President Amara Essy.

The central recommendation is for donors to "consider urgently making an initial adequate special contribution" to financing preparatory phases of African diversification projects and programmes through the African Development Fund (ADF) of the African Development Bank (ADB). This wording differs significantly from the commitment of $50-75 mn to a Commodity Diversification Fund for Africa which Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali proposed in 1993 as a new window of the ADB. He made the proposal in his preliminary evaluation of UN-NADAF which revealed disturbing downtrends in aid and resource flows to the continent despite donor commitments to increase their support for major policy reforms by African countries.

The fact that donors were asked only to "consider" making a contribution also illustrates African and UN difficulties in securing specific commitments on additional funding for diversification. With African delegates worried that progress could be postponed until mid-term evaluation of UN-NADAF in 1996, the compromise fell short of Africa's goals. Its adoption was "a first step" towards implementing UN-NADAF, said Tunisia's Slaheddine Abdellah on behalf of the African group. There were "high hopes" that it would lead to "concrete measures," but Mr. Abdellah still urged to donors to make the first step a reality.

The initial draft resolution had urged donors to urgently commit $50-75 mn in new and additional resources to a replenished Technical Assistance Fund in the ADB for the early stages of diversification. But the donor-driven process of dilution was painfully clear as the draft text laboured towards consensus. The consensus merely invites ADB members to "pay particular attention to diversification... with a view to accelerating this process." Similarly, the drafts said the UN Inter-Agency Task Force would set up the means to advise the ADB on criteria for selecting projects and supplying technical assistance. But the final resolution only invites the Task Force to "make available advisory services" to the ADB on "questions related to" diversification.

Practical problems

By referring specifically to the ADF, the resolution's key recommendation runs into immediate practical problems. The ADF, a concessional arm of the ADB, has not functioned since January 1994 when its seventh replenishment (ADF-VII) was due for 1994-96. African ADB members had proposed a $2.4 bn replenishment. But powerful non-African members who at first talked of $1.9 bn (both well down on the $3 bn of ADF-VI in 1991-93) then held up their offer because of a still unresolved impasse over ADB lending policies.

While joining the consensus, donors restated their opposition to any special diversification fund. Speaking for the European Union (EU), Germany's Wolfgang Runge said this mention of the ADF should not be taken as prejudging current negotiations which were at a "difficult stage." He said the EU still insists that diversification efforts should rely on existing financing mechanisms, and funding for feasibility studies was not as important as African governments going further with market-friendly policies. The resolution called for more "serious consideration" of an international conference on African debt, but US delegate Victor Marrero restated his country's opposition to this comprehensive approach, claiming that "many African countries had benefitted" from the case-by-case method.

Donor reluctance to give specific financial backing to African diversification was strong enough in 1993 to make the General Assembly decide only on further "intensive" consultations on the issue. But these consultations never took place, said Benin's René Valéry Mongbe, despite Africa's urgent need for a diversification fund. Due to lack of consensus, he added in the plenary debate, questions "dear to Africa" seemed destined for abandonment at the end of each General Assembly.

The Group of 77 and China warned that only an "absence of political will" would further delay setting up a fund which would be "the first concrete implementation of UN-NADAF." Egypt's Nabil Elaraby stressed that new and additional resources for diversification would prevent diversion of already programmed and much-needed funds. Several delegates noted Africa's onerous debts, its export stagnation, the sombre economic indicators which the rally in commodity prices had not altered and the fall in real terms of aid and investment since 1990. With Africa still waiting for the resources promised in UN-NADAF, the situation was "painfully reminiscent" of the failed 1980s UN Programme of Action for Africa. Niger's Amadou Seydou said donors should show their support for diversification by replenishing the ADF and the Technical Assistance Fund. Having agreed to share responsibility in implementing the New Agenda, donors should take appropriate action, he added. ■

Steps towards diversification

Noting that it is hard for Africa to get external financing even to prepare diversification projects and programmes, the General Assembly resolution on UN-NADAF focuses on the crucial initial phase of feasibility and other studies. It urges and invites:

- Member countries of the African Development Fund to "consider urgently making an initial adequate special contribution to finance the preparatory phase of commodity diversification;"
- Relevant multilateral institutions to give high priority to aiding commodity diversification in Africa, "taking into account the urgency of the matter;"
- Developed countries to provide technical and financial aid;
- The UN Common Fund for Commodities to consider support measures, including feasibility studies, and "practical ways and adequate means of allowing and facilitating access to finance... including through regional and subregional entities;"
- African countries to set up national diversification councils;
- The African Development Bank to draw up criteria for identifying diversification projects.

Accelerate reforms, donors tell Africans

In return for substantial financing, donors continue to press African governments for more aggressive economic policy reforms, especially privatization and deregulation, as well as greater fiscal and monetary discipline. These elements were common to December meetings of donor Consultative Groups held in Paris by the World Bank .

Zambia

Zambia, for example, was promised $2 bn to cover its financing gap in 1995 if it keeps up the pace of its economic and other policy reforms. At its Consultative Group meeting in Paris on 8-9 December, a delegation led by Finance Minister Ronald Penza restated Zambia's commitment to privatization and other structural changes. The government would work formally with donors to monitor implementation of initiatives for better governance.

Donors welcomed Kenyan President Daniel arap Moi's strong support for new efforts to combat poverty.

Some $1.2 bn of the aid pledges will go to paying off arrears on International Monetary Fund loans from the 1980s. Nearly $350 mn will come in project and commodity aid and $441 mn will be balance of payments support carried over from 1994, with another $154 mn reportedly set aside for debt relief.

Bilateral and multilateral donors, including UNICEF and the UN Development Programme, welcomed the fall in inflation from over 100 per cent in the last four years to under 20 per cent since last July. Nominal interest rates were also down to around 20 per cent from over 200 per cent last April.

But participants noted the sharp rise in poverty since 1980 and the fall in most social indicators, with poverty afflicting nearly 70 per cent of Zambians, 45 per cent of all children chronically malnourished and infant mortality on the rise. Commending government efforts to raise social spending despite sharp budget cuts, donors said they would try to increase their support for poverty-reduction and decentralization of agricultural and social services.

Zambia was also praised for liquidating its national airline just four days before the donors' meeting, a decision the World Bank described as "difficult but necessary." Donors had reportedly threatened to suspend aid if Zambia borrowed any more money to continue supporting the heavily-indebted airline.

Pushing for faster progress on privatization, donors urged the government to stick to its plan to phase out the Zambia Industrial and Manufacturing Corporation by March 1995 and transfer its functions to the ministry of finance. Donors also want a prompt government decision on when and how Zambia Consolidated Copper Mining would be privatized.

Kenya

Kenya's promise to speed up reforms was greeted by donors on 15-16 December with praise for progress already made and pledges of $800 mn for 1995, over a quarter of that in balance of payments support. Two days before the Paris meeting, Kenyan President Daniel arap Moi had responded to earlier donor demands by announcing that from 1 January, the Nairobi stock exchange would be open to foreign capital, with external interests now able to take up to 20 per cent of a quoted company's equity.

Donors welcomed a poverty-reduction initiative that had "strong support from the President," noting that poverty had not fallen in the last 10 years. But they also criticized such shortcomings as the slowness of parastatal reform and privatization.

Since its last donors' meeting in November 1993, Kenya had drastically cut inflation to single digits and the estimated 3.3 per cent growth in output in 1994 was the best for four years. The Kenyan shilling was now fully convertible, the exchange rate had stabilized, nearly all exchange controls were gone, reserves now covered four months of imports, and a small current account surplus was expected. Recent liberalization of the petroleum sector had in turn completed the removal of internal price controls.

Still, donors highlighted such problems as parastatals which continued to drain the budget and unauthorized spending which worsened the fiscal deficit. They warmly welcomed the recent start of legal action in a case of misappropriated public funds, stressing the government's critical need to raise its credibility in donor countries. Donors also noted positive developments on democratization, ethnic tensions and human rights issues, while urging the government to promote open dialogue with Kenyans of all political affiliations, along with press freedom and a strengthened judiciary.

Eritrea

At its 19-20 December consultative group meeting, the first since independence in April 1993, Eritrea got pledges of some $250 mn for 1995 from donors who praised the government for recently promulgating an investment code and improving access to basic social services. They welcomed Eritrea's development strategy which sees private enterprise as a motive force in building a technologically advanced, market-oriented economy.

Finance Minister Haile Woldense had earlier said Eritrea wanted a decisive role in development programmes, and his delegation stressed the need for untied aid. But donors felt project aid would most effectively support sectoral and investment programmes. They welcomed Eritrea's desire to effectively manage foreign aid, but added that donor procedures and regulations must be taken into account.

Malawi

In mid-December, donors praised Malawi's "remarkably peaceful and orderly" transition to democracy last May and pledged $192 mn for 1995-96. Finance and planning minister Aleke Banda said new anti-corruption legislation was under way and the government would take measures aimed at raising primary school enrolment by 50 per cent. ■

Africa's agenda fading in Bretton Woods

By Patrick Smith in Madrid

Africa's core agenda at the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank — deeper debt relief and revision of structural adjustment programmes — could lose priority amidst growing differences between developing and industrialized countries over policy in the two institutions.

This prospect was evident during the major confrontation between the two groups of countries which dominated the 4-6 October annual Fund/Bank meeting in Madrid. The issue was the size and intended beneficiaries of an increased pool of special drawing rights (SDRs), the IMF's reserve currency. The Group of Seven (G-7) industrialized countries want a SDR16 bn (or $23 bn) increase targeting only economies "in transition" (the former Soviet and Eastern European countries), but developing countries led by India and Brazil demand a general allocation of SDR36 bn.

An increase in SDRs does not have a major direct impact on Africa's immediate financing needs. But it would indirectly affect Africa's exports and its prospects for private capital inflows: a senior IMF economist says an extra SDR1 bn ($1.45 bn) could stimulate over SDR 2 bn of economic activity in Africa. However, the main beneficiaries of a bigger SDR pool would be Asia and South America where markets for African commodities are expanding. Asian-based private firms are also increasing investments in Africa, particularly in Nigeria and Uganda. IMF sources do not expect any resolution of the SDR issue until the April 1995 Bank/Fund interim committee meeting.

Tilting balance of power

Backing the right of developing countries to a bigger role in the Fund — they constitute the vast majority of its 179 members, IMF Managing Director Michel Camdessus said in Madrid that "as the international distribution of economic size changes, the Fund must ensure that all member countries 'feel at home' in the Fund... They must be appropriately represented and share fairly in the Fund's financial structure, financing and responsibilities."

The SDR dispute was seen by African finance ministers as symptomatic of the changing balance of world economic power, with the tilt mainly towards Asia. Some, such as Ghana's finance and economic planning minister Kwesi Botchwey, argue that Africa will ultimately benefit from a repositioning of forces within the Bank and Fund. Others fear that more confrontation between industrial and developing countries will further marginalize Africa's agenda at a time when aid flows are at their lowest in more than a decade.

Boost for low-income countries

In Madrid, Mr. Botchwey said that rich countries, "whose domestic policies have such a trenchant effect on the world economy, must not be allowed to do what they please merely because they do not draw on IMF resources." He strongly supported calls for a "more democratic Fund," as he put it, and not to have the G-7 coordinating, monitoring and enforcing global monetary policy. Supporting a strong boost in SDRs, he added that "for low-income countries, especially those in sub-Saharan Africa, the Fund and the Bank will need to provide more, not less, vigorous financial support to compensate for private capital flows which for these countries are likely to continue to be weak for some time to come."

Others, such as Uganda's Finance Minister Jeohash Mayanga-Nkangi, see debt as central to any debate in multilateral institutions. He fears the "SDR Wars" will divert attention from the push to allow multilateral debt rescheduling for the poorest countries. Some 80 per cent of Uganda's debt service in 1994 is owed to the IMF, World Bank and African Development Bank.

Mr. Mayanga-Nkangi hopes international pressure might change the "no-rescheduling rules" of the multilaterals. He sees British Chancellor of the Exchequer Kenneth Clarke's call for the "careful and phased sale of the IMF's gold reserves" to finance more concessional Fund loans as a step towards flexibility. Mr. Clarke also says the IMF could offer a new facility to the "most indebted countries with significant debt to the IMF" and that the World Bank could extend its Fifth Dimension facility which lets heavily indebted countries turn quasi-commercial Bank loans into softer International Development Association credits.

Expectations that South Africa will enhance Africa's influence at the Bank and Fund have yet to be borne out, the prevailing note from Pretoria being one of caution. Finance Minister Chris Liebenberg sat neatly on the fence on the SDR issue, supporting "solutions that do not fuel world inflation, while also alleviating the burden of those countries irrevocably committed to appropriate economic restructuring."

This caution extends to South Africa's borrowing programme. Mr. Liebenberg said his government has not discussed any specific credits with the IMF, although balance of payments problems are expected in 1995. He said there would not be any domestic political veto on IMF credits: "If it is appropriate, if it falls in line with our domestic priorities, if the cost is right, we'll consider it." And while technical work has been done for World Bank education and housing loans, Mr. Liebenberg said "projects are not being held up for lack of money...it's more lack of capacity to deliver on the ground."

Managing Director Michel Camdessus backed a stronger voice for developing countries in the IMF.

One South African banker suggested that Trade Minister Trevor Manuel's more assertive line during negotiations in November on South African access to the Lomé Convention with the European Union may herald a tougher stance in the multilateral arena. "Liebenberg and Manuel have had to deal with very demanding domestic agendas and much of their foreign work has been to convince the markets that the economy is being properly managed. But I wouldn't rule out their ability to lobby highly effectively for their regional interest in the Bank and Fund once they settle into the job." ■

African development aid faces downturn

Aid flows to Africa could fall this year as most donor countries further tighten their budgets. Total official development assistance (ODA) from major donors to developing countries and multilateral institutions was already sharply down in real terms, by 7.8 per cent in 1993, and some aid officials predict an even steeper fall for 1994. For Africa in particular, there could be a sharp downturn in aid receipts if recent proposals for cuts in development aid are approved by the new Senate and Congress in the US.

Total US foreign aid is already down by 20 per cent since 1991 and is at its lowest level since the 1950s. Aid to Africa, which was set at well over $800 mn this year, could now be cut by up to 20 per cent. Africa is not considered a strategic priority by many US legislators and they say it has grown dependent on aid inflows which have not brought economic progress. "The only way to break the devastating cycle of dependence is to end foreign aid entitlement programmes," declared Republican Senator Mitch McConnell, chair of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Foreign Operations which oversees foreign aid.

He announced a bill on 12 December that would eliminate the earmarking of aid for Africa in 1996 and also cut $450 mn for population programmes and international organizations. Mr. McConnell said developing countries must compete for US aid and "aid will flow if a government encourages free trade and investment; protects private property ownership and interest; limits state control of financial institutions, production and manufacturing; and restricts interference in establishing wages and prices." The bill would also close the US Agency for International Development (USAID) and hand its functions to the State Department. USAID had already announced big cuts in its operations in Africa for 1995.

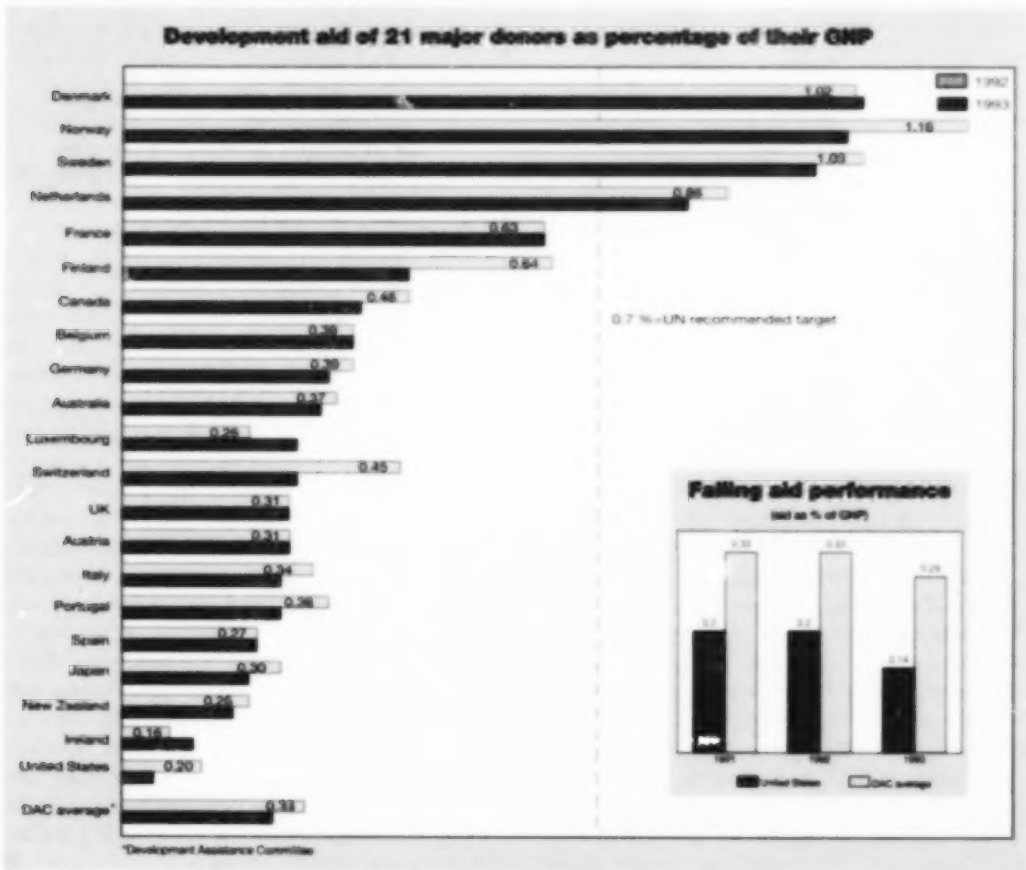
These proposals have prompted USAID Administrator J. Brian Atwood to argue that cutting aid presented the "strategic threat" of international disorder which "endangers the political, economic and security interests" of the US. He told a mid-December Centre for National Policy meeting in Washington that foreign aid had "obviously served American national interest," and that it also "creates jobs for American workers and advances our economic well being." He conceded that some aid had been wasted, and had been "spent to buy influence" during the Cold War.

Aid creates markets

But "every major trading nation has used foreign aid as a primary means of building markets," and "that is why we are helping nations liberalize their markets...(and) remove institutional and legal barriers to trade." All such efforts help create markets "that have the desire and the wherewithal to buy what we have to sell," with the result that "developing countries now represent the fastest growing markets for US goods," growing 10 times faster than European and Japanese markets.

Echoing a concern voiced last May by UNDP Administrator Gustave Speth, Mr. Atwood stressed the central role of aid in crisis-prevention: "We cannot simply wall out the chaos beyond our borders," he said, arguing that with the threat of "one, two, many Rwandas," it was far more economical for donors "to prevent than to reconstruct."

But Mr. McConnell doubts the real impact of aid on crisis prevention. In a time of limited resources, he said the US must focus on what works and "the only thing that's proven to work is free markets and free trade." He backed US support for the World Bank and other international financial institutions and voluntary contributions to UN humanitarian and peace-keeping activities, but said funding levels would be determined on a case-by-case basis. ■



Source: OECD

ECA

from page 1

This meant reforms to inject efficiency and dynamism, empower the private sector, attract domestic and foreign investment and promote popular participation in conditions of peace and stability.

Performance in 1994

Africa's modest overall improvement in growth had significant subregional variations. The six North African countries posted 2.5 per cent growth, well up on their 0.8 per cent in 1993, while growth in 16 West African countries fell from an average 3.2 per cent to 2.6 per cent in 1994. In East and Southern Africa, average growth in 21 countries jumped from 1.5 to 3.7 per cent. Seven Southern African countries, including South Africa, did even better, moving from 1.2 per cent in 1993 to 3.8 per cent in 1994. There was even a turnaround in 10 Central African countries where negative growth slowed from -4.8 per cent in 1993 to -0.4 per cent in 1994. Overall, only 11 African countries had negative growth in 1994 (down from 17 in 1993) while 12 countries exceeded 5 per cent growth, the same number as in 1993.

Despite surging commodity prices, the ECA estimated that Africa's exports rose only 4.2 per cent in nominal value (from $91.3 bn to $95.2 bn) and only 2 per cent in volume. But imports rose by some 6.5 per cent (from $95.5 bn to $101.7 bn), resulting in a bigger current account deficit of $7.8 bn. The impressive rally of commodity prices saw a turnaround in Africa's terms of trade from a 4.9 per cent fall in 1993 to a 0.6 per cent gain in 1994. However, Mr. Yaker pointed out, while the gain for non-oil commodity exporters was 17 per cent, terms of trade worsened by 9 per cent for oil-exporters.

After the CFA franc devaluation, exports had revived in some countries but had yet to reach levels appropriate to this "quantum leap" in competitiveness. Devaluation had largely curbed domestic demand and slowed imports, but it had also "repressed economic growth somewhat." Initial negative effects should lessen in time, but other factors determining competitiveness such as infrastructure, labour skills and incentives needed "at least as much attention as macroeconomic stabilization" in the CFA countries' adjustment programmes.

Turning to the crucial agricultural sector, Mr. Yaker said favourable weather boosted total output by 3.1 per cent from 1.8 per cent in 1993. But up to mid-1994, failed rains brought famine conditions to 22 million people in 10 countries of the Horn and massive death and displacement was averted only through timely distribution of food imports and food aid. Adequate rains in the same subregion were now bringing good harvests, above-average harvests were likely in the Sahel belt and coastal West Africa, while bumper grain harvests were expected in Egypt and Morocco as well as in Zimbabwe and South Africa.

Continued favourable conditions could see agricultural output rising by 5 per cent in 1995, although growth in the food subsector had slowed from an "impressive" 4 per cent in 1993 to only 2.5 per cent this year. With population growth still high at 3 per cent, per capita food output was down 0.5 per cent, leaving Africa "no nearer its goal of food self-sufficiency." Important factors for higher production included good supply of inputs and less damage from pests, but rural infrastructure, incentives for producers and marketing structures all had to be improved.

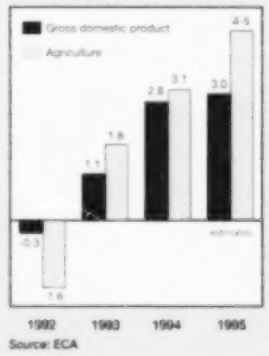
Market reforms

African countries had made progress in market and tax reforms aimed at improving investment conditions. But privatization had often been "thwarted by the paucity of domestic savings" as well as by the "understandable reluctance...to dispose of public enterprises entirely to foreign investors often at give-away prices." Mr. Yaker argued that privatization should "accelerate economic growth and development with equity, rather than widening disparities in society by increasing the concentration of economic power."

He noted that some perennial social problems had worsened. Africa now had 7 million refugees, a third of the world's total, and some 21 million people internally displaced. Population growth was outstripping food and economic output, while "severe" spending cuts and the "emphasis on cost-recovery and cost-sharing" continued to hit education and health. Yet development in all its aspects was "essential" for slowing population growth. Africa had to build and fully utilize the critical human, institutional and infrastructural capacities "for managing a modern economy and polity."

This applied at national and continental levels as Africans also had to work collectively to cope with world economic trends. The African Economic Community (AEC) was a "strategic response" to a world economy evolving around trading blocs, and he urged African and donor countries to make a priority of supporting the AEC's first phase — strengthening Africa's subregional economic communities.

Africa's growth rates
(average annual % change)



Source: ECA

Meaningful support

Turning to the UN's New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UN-NADAF), Mr. Yaker said African countries were fulfilling their commitments, unlike the donor countries. Annual net resource transfers had "fallen far short" of UN-NADAF targets. At some $14 bn, net external funding for Africa (including South Africa) in 1994 was only slightly better than 1993. And with its economies not yet able to attract adequate foreign investment, Africa would still need more substantial development aid.

Donors had also taken "no meaningful steps" to significantly reduce the debt stock of any African country except Egypt. In 1991-94, Mr. Yaker said, 21 African countries had had $7.14 bn of debt rescheduled, compared to Africa's $301.8 bn aggregate debt at end-1993 (including South Africa).

Mr. Yaker recalled that "much of what passed for aid during the Cold War" promoted ideology and military sales, not development. Now that Africa needed more support for its economic and political reforms, donors seemed more reluctant to provide that support. This "so-called 'aid fatigue'" contradicted growing international cooperation on issues of sustainable development, he argued.

Calling on the UN system to facilitate the transfer of experience from Asia and other regions, he said South-South cooperation was vital for Africa. Mr. Yaker stressed Africa's enormous potential and the shared responsibility of African and donor countries. "Africa cannot afford to be left behind in the development race," he concluded. ■

from page 1

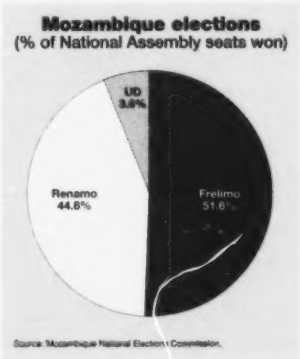
remained high, he added that continued fighting and the failures of the past had "deepened the mistrust between the parties and increased the scepticism of the international community."

Given the prolonged civil war, and despite several clashes, the cease-fire was holding reasonably well, said UN Special Representative Alioune Blondin Beye. With this assurance, the Security Council approved the restoration of the UN Observer Mission to Angola (UNAVEM II) to its previous strength of 350 military and 126 police observers and extended its mandate to 8 February 1995 so it could monitor the cease-fire throughout Angola. The Council will assess conditions before ordering UNAVEM's expansion to 7,000 peace-keepers.

Mozambican process continues

On 19 November, UN Special Representative Aldo Ajello certified that the Mozambican elections were "free and fair" and had taken place with "dignity and integrity." Fully 90 per cent of the electorate voted under the eyes of 2,300 international observers and 35,000 specially trained Mozambicans representing the 14 political parties, while the 7,000 troops of ONUMOZ were already widely deployed.

Although Renamo leader Afonso Dhlakama made allegations of fraud and called for a boycott on the eve of the poll, diplomatic pressure from the UN and Southern African leaders, notably Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe and South African Deputy President Thabo Mbeki, persuaded him to announce on 28 October that Renamo would accept the election results.



The peaceful voting was the fruit of lessons learned from Angola's bitter experience. Angolans had gone into UN-supervised elections in September 1992 with both sides still fully mobilized after 17 years of brutal conflict. The understaffed and underfunded UN presence (just 70 UN peace-keepers and a few hundred international election observers) was overwhelmed by the full-scale fighting that followed UNITA leader Jonas Savimbi's refusal to accept defeat. This led to perhaps the deadliest phase of Angola's war, rapidly costing 100,000 more lives and bringing the death toll since independence in 1975 to a million. By September 1994, over 3 million people were still suffering the consequences of the war, Mr. Boutros-Ghali said.

To ensure viable elections in Mozambique, the UN mounted a two-year operation that cost $1 bn (see chronology). UN peace-keepers collected 150,000 weapons and demobilized 75,000 soldiers from both sides, helping combine 10,000 of them into a new national army. The UN and donor countries also set up a unique $19 mn trust fund to help turn Renamo into a political party, with Mr. Dhlakama drawing over $300,000 a month for expenses. "People were shocked that the UN was prepared to fund a former guerrilla movement," said Mr. Ajello, "but the only way to make this mission a success was to forget conventional wisdom." The three days of polling (the last one hastily added to guarantee full voter access) took place with "a remarkable absence of violence, intimidation and coercion," Mr. Ajello added.

He conceded that ONUMOZ was leaving without unearthing all arms caches, which could fuel banditry and violence. But it had checked virtually all government-declared military locations and 60 per cent of those declared by Renamo during a demobilization process slowed by reluctant compliance in both camps. It also found weapons in 67 undeclared government sites and 79 undeclared Renamo sites. Over 22,000 weapons and plentiful ammunition were found, prompting Mr. Boutros-Ghali to urge the government to destroy or dispose of all weapons surplus to national armed and police force needs.

The political picture

While incumbent President Chissano won comfortably with 54 per cent of the vote to Mr. Dhlakama's 34 per cent, Renamo's strong showing in the legislative elections led to some expectations of a power-sharing tussle. After a 24 November meeting in Maputo with Mr. Chissano, the Renamo leader promised to play a major "role in political and social stability."

The transition in Mozambique

4 October 1992: President Joaquim Chissano and Renamo leader Afonso Dhlakama sign a General Peace Agreement (GPA) in Rome.

15 October: Cease-fire in effect but widespread violations soon reported. UN Special Representative Aldo Ajello arrives in Maputo.

15-16 December: Donors in Rome pledge $398 mn in humanitarian and electoral aid.

16 December: Security Council authorizes UN Operation in Mozambique (ONUMOZ) with a mandate to 31 October 1993.

9 February 1993: First UN troops (from Italy) arrive; deployed in Beira corridor by 1 April.

26 March: Government distributes draft Electoral Law to Renamo and political parties.

10 May: Special UN trust fund set up to help Renamo become a political party.

8-9 June: Donors' meeting in Maputo raises total pledges to $520 mn for May 1993-April 1994 period.

23 August: President Chissano and Mr. Dhlakama meet in Maputo; first meeting since GPA.

17-20 October: After talks in Maputo with UN Secretary-General, agreement reached on demobilization from January 1994.

5 November: ONUMOZ mandate extended to 30 April 1994.

30 November: Twenty troop assembly points opened; 49 opened by 21 February 1994.

9 December: National Assembly approves new Electoral Law.

15 February 1994: National Electoral Commission begins work.

10 March: Full demobilization begins.

11 April: Elections set for 27-28 October.

5 May: ONUMOZ mandate extended to 15 November 1994.

1 June: Voter registration begins; ends on 2 September with 6.4 mn voters registered.

16 August: Demobilization of President Chissano and Armed Forces high command. Mr. Dhlakama and Renamo military leaders demobilized three days later.

22 September: Election campaign starts; ends 24 October.

26 October: Mr. Dhlakama announces election boycott. Voting starts next day at most polling stations.

28 October: Mr. Dhlakama reverses stand. Voting extended to 29 October.

15 November: ONUMOZ mandate extended until new government installed, but not later than 15 December.

19 November: Election results announced; Mr. Ajello declares elections free and fair.

8 December: New Assembly inaugurated.

9 December: President Chissano sworn-in.

13 December: Mr. Ajello leaves Mozambique.

16 December: President Chissano appoints a new government, marking the expiry of the ONUMOZ mandate.

But after President Chissano chose his new government only from Frelimo's ranks, despite external pressure for at least token power-sharing, Mr. Dhlakama made clear his expectations. He told the *Noticias* newspaper in mid-December that according to "the model of multiparty democracy," the small parties, including Renamo, must "begin to govern" in the districts and the provinces: "Everything will be negotiated and Frelimo must not govern alone, either centrally or in the provinces."

The first test of strength was on 8 December when the nine Uniao Democratica (UD) members and the 112 Renamo delegates walked out of the Assembly after boycotting the vote on whether to elect a chairman (Speaker) by secret or open ballot. The 126 Frelimo deputies duly elected Mr. Eduardo Mulembue who promptly began negotiating with Renamo and the UD on resuming the Assembly's order of business.

Mr. Ajello had earlier expressed confidence that there was little risk of renewed war as "waging war is a political decision." In December, he told the Maputo weekly *Savana* that Renamo now had no motive: "It represents a little less than 40 per cent of the electorate... and the situation is very good for each of the Renamo leaders, who are now members of parliament and will have salaries and houses."

Hard road to peace in Angola

On 20 November, just after the UN certified Mozambique's elections, Angolan Foreign Minister Venancio de Moura and UNITA Secretary-General Eugenio Manuvakola signed the Lusaka Protocol mandating a cease-fire, national reconciliation and, eventually, a UN-supervised presidential run-off election. As they signed, with Angolan President Eduardo dos Santos looking on alongside nine other African heads of state, UN Special Representative Alioune Blondin Beye declared: "I pray to God this is the last Angolan peace agreement."

President dos Santos and Mr. Savimbi had been expected to sign the pact. But Mr. Savimbi's absence from Lusaka — he cited security concerns — sparked fears of a new threat to the peace process. Despite a major government offensive in October and November that recaptured most provincial towns from UNITA, the peace talks had progressed through their final stages to the signing of the Lusaka Protocol.

Mr. Savimbi has since accused the government of breaching the cease-fire throughout the country, adding that the Lusaka Protocol was "worse than the Bicesse accord" which had failed to end the war in 1991. Arguing that he feared for his life, Mr. Savimbi has also rejected repeated invitations to hold talks in Luanda with Mr. dos Santos, who insists that this crucial summit must be held in Angola.

Despite this apparent impasse, concrete progress was made at the 31 December meeting of the joint government-UNITA commission set up to implement the Lusaka accord, including such vital aspects as troop cantonment and disarmament. The commission's early work, aided by Mr. Beye, resulted in the 10 January talks between the top government and UNITA military commanders, Generals João Baptista de Matos and Arlindo Chenda Pena "Ben Ben". They reached key agreements on halting troop movements, disengagement in zones of current confrontation, release of prisoners and joint demining activities. The fact that Gen. Matos went into UNITA-held territory for the talks was "a goodwill gesture for peace," said Gen. Pena. UNAVEM military chief Major-General Chris Garuba of Nigeria, who co-signed the agreement, was confident that instructions would now go "down to their forces on the ground to stop all hostile activities."

Just before the November peace pact in Lusaka, Mr. Beye disclosed that Angola's National Assembly had passed a blanket amnesty covering both warring parties. Making another gesture towards reconciliation, President dos Santos reversed an earlier stand when, in a 31 December speech to the nation, he invited all political parties to a national conference at a date yet to be fixed.

The presidential runoff election mandated by the Lusaka Protocol will not take place until the UN determines the country is sufficiently stable. The Lusaka pact gives UNITA a place in the new government, but as even the successful process in Mozambique has shown, demobilization, disarmament and creating a unified national army are formidable tasks.

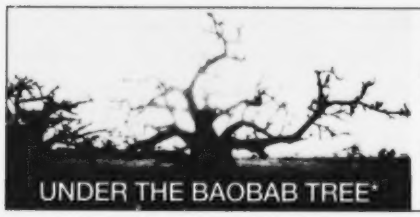
Landmines and food

Another major challenge for both Mozambique and Angola is their potential food emergency. The World Food Programme (WFP) says a severe shortfall in food aid for Mozambique could disrupt efforts to resettle 885,000 refugees and provide for an additional 436,000 people hit by drought and crop failure. Recovery of agriculture in both countries is severely hindered by landmines and the UN is training nationals in mine-clearing so vast tracts of fertile land can be reclaimed.

UN / P. Sudhakaran

A woman votes on 28 October in Catembe, Mozambique.

In Angola, other goals are to clear routes for deployment of UNAVEM personnel, assembly of demobilized soldiers and road distribution of relief supplies instead of costly airlifts. After supplying over 2 million Angolans in 1994 with over 200,000 tonnes of food aid costing $100 mn, WFP says this year it needs 127,500 tonnes of food costing $65 mn for 1.2 million Angolans. But this estimate is based on sustained peace that allows for planting and the resettlement of displaced people, particularly those hit by last year's warfare. WFP will also give priority to people in formerly inaccessible areas and besieged towns. The agency plans to move from short-term relief to long-term rehabilitation and reconstruction, for example, using food-for-work schemes to help rebuild infrastructure and support food production. ■



My children, our Africa

By Djibril Diallo

I held her in my arms, paralyzed for a moment by fear. Then I began to run towards the medical tent. It was too late. She had died in my arms. Sometimes I dream of Zelleke, an Ethiopian baby whose mother had, in an act of despair, placed her in my arms so I could save her. That was nearly 10 years ago in a refugee camp in Ethiopia at a time when the famine was reaching its most critical point and millions of mothers and fathers lost their children. It was because of my role as a UN official that Zelleke's mother had turned to me. And it was as a father that I ran towards the medical tent.

Zelleke died the same year that my son Salif was born in New York. I witnessed the miracle of his birth and I held him in my arms even before the umbilical cord was cut. It is said that once you have your own children, you don't look at other children the same way any more. This has certainly been my experience. Whenever I hear of a child that has been killed, mutilated or abused, I feel the anguish of the parents and mentally, I hold my children tighter in my arms. At such times, the figure of 10,000 African children dying every day ceases to be just another statistic. It becomes 10,000 people for whom something could have been done at little cost.

UN/ M. Tzovaras

Mr. Djibril Diallo, Special Assistant to the Executive Director of UNICEF, has been appointed Director of the Public Affairs Division at the UN Development Programme (UNDP) with effect from 1 March 1995.

In Africa today, the child has become an endangered species while remaining the essential instrument for preserving Africa's cultural heritage. This is why the Organization of African Unity (OAU) declared 16 June as the Day of the African Child. The OAU declaration affirms Africa's commitment to the survival, protection and development of children, the region's most important resource.

In this context, raising my two children in New York is a real challenge. One day, a visiting Nigerian friend asked my daughter Mariama, then aged five, if she was African. "I'm not African," she protested. "What are you then?" We held our breath waiting for her answer. "I am Senegalese," she replied, darting gaily out of the room. We all sighed with relief. Even if she didn't yet place Senegal in Africa, she had at least understood what she was.

My children now straddle several cultures, which will better prepare them for tomorrow's world. Perhaps they will choose to wholly accept or reject certain aspects of these cultures. This decision will be theirs alone, but it will not be left entirely to chance. I want them to feel Senegalese. Knowing Peulh, my mother tongue, has given them access to my culture. Salif and Mariama don't speak it fluently, but they understand enough not to feel like strangers when we go home on vacation every two years. My wife and I also chose a school for them, the UN International School, which encourages the cultures of all its pupils.

I will never forget the day when Salif, then in kindergarten, came home clutching a torn piece of paper. Proudly, he showed me his drawing of a Senegalese flag under which he had written "Salif—Senegal and United States."

Sometimes, I wonder if I am more demanding with my son and more protective with my daughter. I am very sensitive to this question because traditionally, fathers in most societies, always push their sons more: the sons will become head of the family; the daughters will get married off...

Since I travel a lot, the time I spend with my children is very precious. I coach them in football, take them swimming and organize family picnics. My relations with my father were much stricter. I hug, play and joke with my children in a way my father would never have. But I never had the slightest doubt that we were, as children, the centre of my father's existence.

What more can I ask for my children than that they have, just like all African children, the same sense of pride that I had?

Endangered children

In January 1994 in Malanje, Angola, little Tunisia became an orphan like many other children in this city. We found this six-month old baby still gripping the corpse of her mother, three days after the mother was killed while searching for food. Tunisia's mother was a victim of one of the worst scourges of today: anti-personnel mines.

UNICEF and other humanitarian organizations have denounced the manufacture of this cowardly weapon which kills or mutilates civilians and soldiers and is particularly devastating for children.

Originally, mines sought to wound rather than kill, and to slow the enemy's progress. Today, mines have become the premier weapons of terror aimed at intimidating civilian populations.

Current estimates are that over 110 mn mines are scattered in 64 countries and another 2-5 mn are laid each year. Over a million people have fallen victim to mines since 1975. Africa and Asia have the world's largest concentration of anti-personnel mine fields and over 30 mn mines are buried in some 20 African countries. Angola heads the African list with some 9-15 mn engines of death and mutilation, followed by Somalia, Mozambique, Rwanda, Liberia and Sudan.

In such countries, villages, cities, roads, paths, rice paddies, fields, bridges and rivers are mined. A UN report stresses that mines "make arable land unusable and make previously self-sufficient regions dependent on external food aid."

Children run the greatest risks, as they use pathways to go to school, to fetch water and fire wood, they tend the herds, and are quite simply on the look-out for a new toy. And of course, mine fields, by virtue of their deadly purpose, are laid to look no different from the surrounding countryside.

Some mines are designed to look like harmless toys, such as the object that looked like "the plastic top of a thermos flask" which a young Somali picked up. "After the explosion, he became blind, his face is disfigured, his right arm is amputated at the wrist and both his knees are shattered because of the shrapnel," reports Physicians for Human Rights.

**The African Baobab is one of the world's hardiest trees, thriving in even the most arid environment. It is also the tree under which some Africans traditionally meet to decide issues of common concern*

AFRICA AGENDA

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

27-29 March, Johannesburg, South Africa: "Sub-Saharan Oil and Minerals," an international conference to promote investment in the Sub-Saharan mining and energy industries. Contact conference secretariat on tel (44-71) 600-6660 or fax (44-71) 600-4044.

6-12 March, Copenhagen, Denmark: UN World Summit on Social Development.

3-8 April, Kampala, Uganda: International conference on Education and Training for Refugees and Displaced Persons. Tel or fax (256-41) 541.562.

3-14 April, Tunis, Tunisia: Ninth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders.

5-7 April, Providence, Rhode Island, US: Hunger, Scarcity and Policy: Strengthening People's Capacities for Development. Eighth annual Hunger Research Briefing and Exchange organized by the World Hunger Programme of Brown University. Topics include "Economic Liberalization, GATT and Food Security: Conflicting Evidence," and "Hunger in the United States: Changing Policy Impacts." Tel (401) 863-2700 or fax 863-2192.

24 April - 5 May, Nairobi, Kenya: Meeting of Preparatory Committee for the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II).

7-9 August, Washington, US: Third HIV/AIDS Prevention Conference will deal with Evolving Responses to an Evolving Epidemic. Organized by the US Agency for International Development. Call (703) 516-9779.

4-15 September, Beijing, China: Fourth UN World Conference on Women.

3-14 June 1996, Istanbul, Turkey: United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II).

WHAT'S TAKEN PLACE

26-27 January, Washington, US: World Bank conference on The Uruguay Round and the Developing Economies. Call (202) 473-1784.

23-29 January, Dakar, Senegal: "Waves of Freedom" will be the theme of the Sixth World Conference of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC 6). Call (221) 22.57.92 or fax (221) 22.58.01.

16-20 January, Lesotho: Colloquium on The African University in the 1990s and Beyond, sponsored by the Association of African Universities and Donors to African Education. Call (33-1) 4503-3796.

16-18 January, Washington, US: International Development Conference, organized by the International Development Conference and the Society for International Development. Call (703) 642-3628.

8-9 January 1995, Washington, US: Annual Agriculture Symposium, sponsored by the World Bank. Call (202) 473-0378.

16-17 December, Aix-en-Provence, France: "The UN and Restoration of the State," conference organized by the Institut d'études politiques (IEP) of Aix-en-Provence and the UN Information Centre in Paris. Contact Prof. Yves Daudet, IEP, on tel (33) 42.17.01.65 or fax 42.17.01.99; UNIC, Paris, on tel (33-1) 45.68.10.00 or fax 43.06.46.78.

12-16 December, Jakarta, Indonesia: "Promoting Sustainable Development in Africa: Sharing Experience with Asia" was the main theme of the Asia-Africa Forum, organized by the United Nations, the UN Development Programme, the Global Coalition for Africa and the government of Japan, as a follow-up to the October 1993 Tokyo International Conference on African Development.

13-15 December, Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire: AGUA 94, a regional workshop on Water Resource Management and National Environment Action Plans in Africa. Contact AGUA 94 on tel (225) 241.443 or fax 242.033

7-9 December, Lusaka, Zambia: Mining Forum organized by the Southern African Development Community and the European Commission. Investment/exploration projects from SADC countries were presented, as well as country updates on mining sector, trade, investment and policy issues. Call (39-6) 324-1719.

21-23 November, Montreux, France: International Symposium on Water in Armed Conflicts, held by the International Committee for the Red Cross. Call (44-21) 730-2317.

21-22 November, Johannesburg, South Africa: First African Development Bank Conference in South Africa. Call (27-11)883-3737.

16-23 November, Dakar, Senegal: African Regional Preparatory Conference for the Fourth World Conference on Women. Phone: (212) 963-5086; fax: 963-3463.

10-12 November, Dakar, Senegal: African Women's Economic Policy Meeting, hosted by the Development GAP, the National Council of Churches of Kenya and Oxfam America; linked to the Regional Preparatory Conference for the Fourth World Conference on Women. Contact The Development GAP on tel (202) 898-1566 or fax 898-1612.

17-21 October, Columbus, Ohio, US: UN International Symposium on Trade Efficiency, convened by Geneva-based UN Conference on Trade and Development. Tel (41-22) 907-5816/28 or fax 907-0043.

16-23 October, Accra, Ghana: "The Media and Sustainable Development" was the theme of the Ninth biannual conference of the African Council for Communication Education (ACCE). Call the ACCE Secretariat on (254-2) 227.043 or fax 750-329.

19-21 September, Washington: Second Annual Conference on Environmentally Sustainable Development organized by the World Bank. Tel (202) 473-5690

16-17 September, the Hague, Netherlands: "Rwanda in its regional context: Human Rights, Reconciliation and Rehabilitation" was the topic of an international conference organized by the North-South Centre of the Council of Europe and the Organization of African Unity.

AFRICA BOOKS

Africa to 2000 and Beyond: Imperative Political and Economic Agenda by Philip Ndegwa and Reginald H. Green (East African Educational Publishers, Nairobi; 1994)

Dark Victory: The United States, Structural Adjustment and Global Poverty by Walden Bello, Shea Cunningham and Bill Rau (Pluto Press, London; 1994; $12.95)

From Adjustment to Development in Africa: Conflict, Controversy, Convergence, Consensus? eds. Giovanni Andrea Cornia and Gerald K. Helleiner. A UNICEF study. (Macmillan Press, Basingstoke, UK; 1994; hb £45, pb £14.99)

Faith and Credit: The World Bank's Secular Empire by Susan George and Fabrizio Sabelli (Penguin Books, London; 1994; £6.99)

The Pursuit of Reform: Global Finance and the Developing Countries, ed. Jan Joost Teunissen (FONDAD); The Hague, Netherlands; 1993]. Proceedings of the Conference on the Functioning of the International Monetary System and Financing of Development, organized by the Forum on Debt and Development (FONDAD) and held in The Hague in 1993.

Debt, Development and Equity in Africa by Karamo N.M. Sonko (University Press of America, Lanham, MD, US; 1994; $42.50)

UNCTAD Statistical Pocket Book (UN Conference on Trade and Development, Geneva; 1994). Data for quick reference on growth, trade, investment and the development process, covering the world economy over the past five years.

Liberalizing International Transactions in Services: A Handbook (UNCTAD, Geneva, and World Bank, Washington; 1994)

UNCTAD Review 1994 (UN Conference on Trade and Development, Geneva; 1994). Includes papers on multilateral trade negotiations; foreign direct investment and trade; free trade and sustainable development; commodity market trends and developing countries; and adjustment and development in sub-Saharan Africa.

Women's Health: Towards a Better World (World Health Organization, Geneva; 1994). Report of the first meeting of the Global Commission on Women's Health, held in Geneva on 13-15 April 1994.

Socio-economic Determinants of Fertility in Sub-Saharan Africa: A summary of findings of a World Bank research project by Martha Ainsworth (World Bank, Washington; 1994)

Political Re-Mapping of Africa: Transnational Ideology and the Re-Definition of Africa in World Politics by Tukumbi Lumumba-Kasongo (University Press of America, Lanham, Maryland, US; 1993; $32.50)

When Refugees Go Home, eds. Tim Allen and Hubert Morsink (Africa World Press, Trenton, US, and UN Research Institute for Social Development, Geneva; 1994)

AFRICA IN BRIEF

African children benefit from UNICEF strategy

Despite some "major setbacks," UNICEF says most countries have made progress in meeting child health goals set at the 1990 World Summit for Children. In *The State of the World's Children 1995*, UNICEF says three-quarters of infants in most African countries are likely to be immunized against the six major childhood diseases by end-1995. Measles cases should be down by 95 per cent, and polio and guinea worm will be nearly eradicated by 2000. Already, malnutrition, vitamin A and iodine deficiencies are down, and access to primary education, safe water, oral rehydration therapy and breast-feeding is better. For the first time, says UNICEF, "internationally agreed targets for social development are mostly being met."

The strategies that are making this possible will be UNICEF's principal contribution to the UN World Summit for Social Development next March, says the report. But "economic exclusion" and "social disintegration" have caused catastrophic setbacks for children in some countries, says UNICEF, pointing to Rwanda (the first in Africa to have immunized 80 per cent of its infants), Mozambique, Somalia, Angola, and Sudan where "far more children than soldiers have been killed and disabled."

Global rates of infant mortality are down, but some African countries show the opposite trend, and AIDS has already killed almost 500,000 children. In some areas, 25 to 30 per cent of pregnant women attending antenatal clinics are HIV positive, with one-third of their babies also infected and likely to die in infancy.

UNICEF points out that only a quarter of aid goes to the 40 least developed countries; less than 15 per cent of that goes to agriculture, under 6 per cent to primary health care and family planning and barely 2 per cent to primary schools. And of the $2 bn spent annually on AIDS prevention, only about 10 per cent is spent in the developing world. Restructuring health and education budgets is part of the answer, UNICEF argues, citing Zimbabwe's 10-year moratorium on investing in central hospitals in order to focus on rural health. ■

Working group to finalize Agenda for Development

Amid North-South divergences over the UN's proper role in development, the General Assembly has set up a working group which will consider, from mid-February 1995, the finalization and adoption of an action-oriented agenda for development. Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali's original *Agenda*, issued in May 1994 as a counterpart to his 1992 *An Agenda for Peace*, launched the current debate on how to strengthen the UN's role in development. His latest proposals for the Agenda were discussed at a 21-22 November special debate of the General Assembly.

The working group will consider these proposals along with views expressed during the ministerial-level segment of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and the World Hearings on Development organized by then General Assembly President S.R. Insanally last June. Along with methods of strengthening international economic cooperation, the group will discuss a proposal to convene a UN conference on development. In the November debate, the Group of 77 and China (G-77) called for a more "action-oriented" Agenda in such key areas as aid and trade. On Mr. Boutros-Ghali's proposal for outright debt cancellation for the least developed and poorest countries, and "adequate and permanent" reduction for debt-distressed countries making economic reforms, the G-77 called for even firmer language while the US opposed "permanent debt reduction." ■

Little new funding for Desertification Convention

Amid pledges to adopt a "bottom up" approach to combating the degradation of drylands, 87 countries signed the UN Convention against Desertification in Paris on 14-15 October.

Danger signals for future of Lomé Convention

Top European Commission officials say the Lomé Convention cannot continue into the next century in its "present exclusive form." But with mid-term negotiations on the fourth Convention (1990-2000) near the crucial, final stages, African, Caribbean and Pacific group (ACP) officials argue that "we're entering very difficult discussions with the European Union (EU) on aid" and a debate on the future of the Convention could be a distraction.

While the EU has warned the ACP not to expect a massive increase in aid in 1996-2000, the European Director-General for Development Peter Pooley says contributions from new EU members Austria, Finland and Sweden could raise the Lomé budget by 12.5 per cent. The Convention is a 20-year old trade and aid pact between the 12 EU countries and 70 ACP countries. The fourth pact provides a $13 bn aid package spread over five years with virtually duty-free access to EU markets for ACP agricultural and industrial exports. ACP countries are seeking a substantial increase in EU aid to take account of inflation and population growth.

But it is increasingly difficult to explain why the EU gives more aid and special trade benefits to ACP members only, says Mr. Pooley. He sees no rationale for not granting Asian, Central and South American states, some poorer than some African countries, similar preferences.

Latin American banana producers have fiercely criticized the Convention, arguing that their ACP competitors have better access to EU markets and that these preferences violate the post-Uruguay Round regulations of free trade under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). The EU and ACP have asked GATT for a waiver for Lomé.

Mr. Pooley insists he is only arguing for an extension of ACP privileges to other countries at similar levels of development, but the European Commission is also studying the feasibility of breaking the Convention up into smaller arrangements with the subregional bodies that group ACP states. An example is the Southern African Development Community (SADC) with which EU relations are improving. ACP Secretary-General Ghebray Berhane has said that instead of jumping to convenient conclusions, both sides should undertake "serious and coherent study" of future relations. The ACP, he adds, intends to do its own research into the future of Lomé, consulting African universities, research centres and the UN Economic Commission for Africa.

By Shada Islam in Brussels

Donors will facilitate access to anti-desertification technologies and information, and mobilize "substantial financial resources" mainly through existing development budgets. Although there was still no commitment to providing the "new and additional" funding agreed at the 1992 Earth Summit, donors did include some new money in the aid packages urgently needed, especially in Africa, to cover the period until the Convention becomes legally binding — at least 50 countries must ratify the Convention, which could take two years.

Desertification affects a quarter of the planet and threatens the livelihood of 900 million people in 100 countries. Causes include deforestation, overgrazing, overcropping, poor irrigation practices and climate change. Two-thirds of Africa is considered dryland, of which 73 per cent is "degraded."

A previous UN Plan of Action to Combat Desertification largely failed because of poor funding and its inadequate grasp of relevant socio-economic issues. This convention specifically aims to prevent mass migration and loss of biodiversity, and sets up a "Global Mechanism" to identify and coordinate funding sources. It encourages governments to seek funding from the Global Environment Facility which was designated by the Earth Summit as the main channel for resources for environmental protection programmes. ■

Asia-Africa Forum calls for greater cooperation

African countries have been urged to make broad economic and social interventions in order to move from crisis to sustainable development. The "Bandung Framework for Asia-Africa Cooperation," adopted at a 12-15 December forum in Indonesia, stressed the need for human resource, institutional and infrastructural development and emphasized food security and external viability. Debt reduction alone would not solve Africa's debt crisis, said participants, who included senior officials from 42 Asian and African countries and 21 development institutions. The Forum was co-organized by the Japanese and Indonesian governments, the Global Coalition for Africa, the UN Development Programme and the UN through the Office of the Special Coordinator for Africa and the Least Developed Countries. It called for more experience-sharing between Asia and Africa and greater cooperation in trade, investment, aid and technology transfer. ■

UN book details actions against apartheid

The United Nations and Apartheid, 1948-1994. *With an Introduction by UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali. Published by the UN Department of Public Information, New York, 572 pp, $29.95 (in the US). Vol. 1 in the UN Blue Book Series.*

By Salim Lone

At its very first session in 1946, the General Assembly rejected the contention by the government of South Africa that the question of racial discrimination in the country — brought to the Assembly's attention by India — was a matter of "domestic jurisdiction." And with this precedent-setting decision on the right of the international community to be concerned about a member state's domestic affairs, the United Nations embarked on a half-century-long, anti-apartheid struggle. In the process, says the Secretary-General in an extensive introduction to this book, the UN learned the meaning of the commitments it made when it adopted its Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In that struggle, the UN cut its teeth on some of the bedrock peace and security issues with which the world continues to grapple, such as balancing the deeply-entrenched principle of national sovereignty with the right of the international community to be involved in combatting racist tyranny, and the question of embargoes and sanctions. But the central importance of this publication lies in how it brings to life the wealth of historical detail residing in UN archives by reproducing all its key anti-apartheid documents.

An indispensible guide for the study of international efforts in the struggle against apartheid.

We discover, for example, that when the question of apartheid was formally tabled for discussion at the General Assembly for the first time in 1952, Egypt was the only independent African country to join the 12 other member states which asked that this matter be taken up (document 4, page 223).

Similarly, the credentials of the South African delegation to the General Assembly were first rejected in 1970 — but uncertainty about how to proceed in this novel territory meant that the delegation continued to participate in the Assembly's work. Finally, in 1974, the Assembly President, Mr. Abdelaziz Bouteflika of Algeria, took the bull by the horns and declared that he interpreted the Assembly position to mean that it "refuses to allow the South African delegation to participate in its work" (document 75, page 333). Although challenged, his ruling was upheld by 91 votes to 22, with 19 abstentions.

Mr. Bouteflika said he had acted because the Security Council had been unable to adopt a position in response to a General Assembly resolution asking the Council to review South Africa's relationship with the UN (since only the Council can recommend the expulsion of a member state to the Assembly).

The Assembly and the Council often sparred over the actions needed to press the South African regime to abandon apartheid. The Assembly asked the Council, in a number of resolutions, to impose mandatory sanctions on South Africa, but only in 1977 did the Council vote for a mandatory arms embargo. The Assembly therefore passed many resolutions on limiting official contact and trade with South Africa, including an oil embargo (1979) which many nations applied despite its non-mandatory nature.

The Assembly also initiated a wide range of actions through its Special Committee Against Apartheid, including advocacy campaigns for mandatory sanctions. Interestingly, such campaigns were allowed even in states opposed to sanctions, because of strong public sentiment.

The publication also sheds valuable light on the UN role in ensuring a peaceful transition to democratic rule in the 1990s. Once that transition began, media coverage focused on events within South Africa, and little is known about the very active UN role. This book fills that gap.

Also available in the Blue Books Series are: *The United Nations and Cambodia, 1991-1995* and *The United Nations and Nuclear Non-Proliferation.*

AFRICA WATCH

Mandela presented with new UN book on apartheid

UN/E. Debelle

Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali presented President Nelson Mandela, during Mr. Mandela's recent visit to UN headquarters, with a copy of *The United Nations and Apartheid, 1948-1994*, the first volume in the new UN Blue Books series (see page 19 for a review of the book). Also in the picture is Mr. Samir Sanbar, Assistant Secretary-General for Public Information, whose department publishes the series.

Mr. Boutros-Ghali also presented Mr. Mandela with an album of historic photographs highlighting UN anti-apartheid activities, as well as audio tapes from the General Assembly debate of 11 October 1963, when speakers condemned the then on-going trials of political leaders in South Africa. Another item was a 30-minute video on the role of the UN Observer Mission in helping bring about the first democratic elections in South Africa.

CHILDREN

UN to study impact of armed conflict on children

UN

Mrs. Graça Machel, former Education Minister of Mozambique, briefed the press at the UN last November on a study the UN is undertaking at the request of the General Assembly. The study, to be presented in late 1996, will examine the plight of children in situations of armed conflict. It will propose measures for protecting children and subsequently promoting their physical and psychological recovery and reintegration. Mrs. Machel was appointed by Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, and will work with an international group of eminent persons and a technical advisory team. UNICEF and the UN Centre for Human Rights will also collaborate. ■

DEBT

Creditors offer deeper debt relief with 'Naples terms'

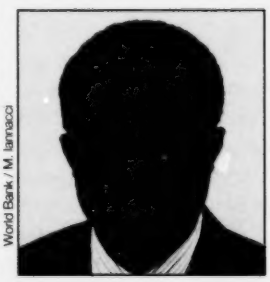
After four years of discussion, bilateral creditors have moved closer to the deeper debt relief for poorer countries first proposed in the "Trinidad terms" by the UK in 1990. Paris Club creditors agreed on 16 December to offer 67 per cent debt reduction to certain countries carrying out IMF and World Bank-approved programmes. Since 1991, eligible debtors have been offered 50 per cent debt reduction under the "enhanced Toronto" terms. Mirroring the "Trinidad terms," creditors may now also act on the entire stock of a country's eligible debt, instead of limiting relief on debt due 12-17 months after a rescheduling.

The new package is known as the "Naples terms" after the city in which Group of Seven leaders agreed last July to deepen debt relief. The terms apply to countries with per capita income of $500 or less, or with a debt-to-exports ratio over 350 per cent. Other low-income countries (with per capita income of $695 or less) could get "enhanced Toronto" terms between 50-67 per cent. Over 20 African countries could get "Naples terms," but Paris Club officials stress that any takers will be ineligible for further rescheduling. ■

STOP PRESS

WORLD BANK OFFICIAL NAMED TO HEAD ECA

The Secretary-General has appointed Mr. Kingsley Y. Amoako of Ghana (below) as the new Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) as of 1 May 1995. A World Bank staff member since 1974 and Director of its Education and Social Policy Department since January 1993, Mr. Amoako, aged 48, will replace Mr. Layashi Yaker of Algeria, who was appointed in 1992. ■



World Bank / M. Iannacco

UNICEF

JAMES GRANT, 1922-1995

As we went to press, the death was reported in New York of Mr. James P. Grant, aged 72, UNICEF's Executive Director since 1980. Mr. Grant worked tirelessly to promote what became known worldwide as the "child survival revolution." Citing Mr. Grant's "complete and dedicated commitment," UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali said the survival, health, growth and education of hundreds of millions of children in the developing world "have benefitted practically and immeasurably from his extraordinary efforts on their behalf." Under Mr. Grant, UNICEF focused heavily on Africa, and he was the driving force behind the landmark UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) and the World Summit for Children (1990). The Secretary-General has named Mr. Richard Jolly as Acting Executive Director. ■